

LONDON ASSEMBLY

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, Chair of the Transport Committee

Sir Peter Hendy CBE
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Dear Peter,

Transport Committee response to consultation on extending the Bakerloo line

I am writing, on behalf of the Transport Committee, to set out our response to TfL's consultation on extending the Bakerloo line south.

We fully support the extension of the Bakerloo line into South East London and welcome the opportunity to comment on TfL's proposals for this programme. There is available capacity on the Bakerloo line, and extending it beyond Elephant & Castle will help improve transport connections for Londoners in this area, as well as alleviating crowding on other services. In this submission I set out the Committee's views in response to the options set out by TfL.

Options 1a and 1b

The Committee does not take a view as a whole on whether the Old Kent Road (1a) or Camberwell/Peckham (1b) option is preferable for the route between Elephant & Castle and New Cross Gate. Ideally both areas would be served by an extension, as both options would provide significant benefits to local residents. At this stage of the process, it is important that TfL sets out the criteria upon which the decision will be made.

We are concerned that in the consultation documentation, 1a and 1b are presented as zero-sum options, without consideration of complementary schemes. Transport services in South East London need to be improved in a number of different ways, and extending the Bakerloo line should be only one element of a wider programme. Such an approach would mean that the areas not chosen for the Bakerloo line extension would also experience a comparable uplift in transport connectivity. This is not a call for 'compensation' for the unsuccessful route, but for a coordinated strategy for South East London transport connections. For instance, the re-opening of Camberwell station for Thameslink services is mentioned in the background document for the consultation as something TfL supports:

"...the reopening of Camberwell station on the Thameslink route is being pursued by the London Borough of Southwark, with support from TfL."

The Committee welcomes this statement, but strongly encourages TfL to develop this proposal further as part of this consultation, as it is intimately related to the Bakerloo line proposal.

TfL should:

- Set out the criteria to be used for deciding between the Old Kent Road and Camberwell/Peckham route options.
- Develop a wider plan for public transport improvement in South East London that includes the preferred Bakerloo extension route alongside schemes serving other parts of the area.

Hayes line

TfL is proposing that the Bakerloo line extends to Hayes and Beckenham Junction, which would mean replacing the existing National Rail services between Lewisham and these stations with London Underground services. We agree that extending London Underground services to Hayes and Beckenham Junction would bring many benefits to residents along this route.

The consultation survey asks stakeholders for views on this proposal, although we note that it is not presented as an 'option' (unlike the Elephant & Castle–New Cross Gate routes and the Bromley extension). This suggests that TfL considers this change to be a necessary element of the extension scheme, although the reasons for this have not been explained in full.

TfL has not yet provided sufficient detail on what alternatives are being considered to this proposal, to allow stakeholders to express an informed preference. This includes options to upgrade National Rail services. For instance, the background document notes that extending the London Overground from New Cross is being considered by TfL:

“A possible extension of the London Overground from New Cross is also under consideration. TfL is currently working to understand the costs, engineering and timetabling feasibility of this proposal.”

The Committee welcomes this statement, but notes the lack of clarity about whether an Overground extension is an alternative to the Bakerloo extension or a complementary scheme. Another option was discussed at the Committee's meeting in October 2014 with Ian Brown, former managing director of London Rail at TfL, who suggested running Thameslink services on this line should also be considered. If these are potential alternatives to the Bakerloo line proposals, it is important that Londoners have the opportunity to compare the costs and benefits of each.

TfL should:

- Set out in more detail any potential alternatives to this proposal that TfL is considering, including any options to upgrade National Rail services between New Cross Gate and Hayes and Beckenham Junction.

Impact on passengers

TfL's proposals will benefit many passengers in South East London, providing faster and more frequent connections to central London. Some passengers may lose out, however, following the removal of National Rail services on the Hayes line. We note that TfL considers the diversion of passengers away from London Bridge to be one of the benefits of the scheme, as it may release capacity for other services. We support the objective of releasing capacity on London Bridge services although this could have a negative effect on passengers currently travelling on the Hayes line to London Bridge or Cannon Street. TfL needs to understand the precise effects these proposals will have, by establishing how many passengers will have longer journey times and/or be required to change lines during their journey in the future.

Despite existing spare capacity on the Bakerloo line and the increased number of trains proposed for the Hayes service, there remains the possibility of overcrowding in the future. The population of South East London is increasing, and will keep doing so, especially if the expected new development along the line means a higher number of commuters are living in the area. Overcrowding would limit the benefits of the extension for passengers in inner South East London.

TfL should:

- Conduct further research to establish the extent of any negative impacts on passengers as a result of replacing National Rail with Bakerloo line services.
- Set out its assumptions for the level of crowding on an extended Bakerloo line.

Costs and funding

TfL has given an estimate of £3 billion for the core extension of the Bakerloo line to Hayes and Beckenham Junction, with a further £1 billion cost for extending to Bromley town centre. There are different elements within the core programme, the costs of which have not been specified. First, the new line and stations between Elephant & Castle and New Cross Gate. Second, the replacement of National Rail services on the Bakerloo line. TfL should provide a breakdown of the costs of each element.

We understand that TfL is proposing to fund the Bakerloo line extension from the proceeds of new development along the route. The Committee supports this in principle, while also recognising there will be a wider range of beneficiaries from the programme. TfL should consider how other sources of funding may be utilised, including government grant and revenues from devolved taxes.

TfL should:

- Break down the overall £3 billion estimate for the Bakerloo line extension, to specify the costs of a) the extension from Elephant & Castle to New Cross Gate, and b) the replacement of National Rail services on the Bakerloo line.
- Continue to explore a range of funding sources for the extension programme, and publish more detailed plans for consultation at a later stage.

Bromley extension (option 2)

The Committee supports, in principle, the extension of services to Bromley town centre as part of the Bakerloo line extension, subject to TfL addressing issues discussed in this submission. We note that TfL is planning to carry out further work to assess the feasibility of route and station options, and estimate the costs more accurately. We welcome this, and look forward to commenting on more detailed proposals.

Tramlink

TfL asks if there are other options or routes that could boost growth and transport accessibility in South East London. We believe that, in addition to other services discussed in this submission, TfL should examine the potential benefits of the extension of Tramlink to Crystal Palace and other destinations, to establish how this could provide improved connectivity for South East London residents.

We trust that TfL will take our comments into account and look forward to hearing the outcomes of the consultation in due course.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM
Chair of the Transport Committee

